pancy tenants were affected. Sir Malcolm Hailey, then Governor of U.P., has admitted that the foundations of existing rents had collapsed and far-reaching changes were necessary, but at that time there was no evidence to show that the Government was in any way prepared for any drastic measures. The agony of the cultivator was intense. The Congress threatened to start a no-rent campaign and the peasant took the threat literally. Mahatma Gandhi endeavoured to secure minimum relief for the Kisan but with little success. He appealed to both Kisan and Zemindar for mutual toleration. But the Government pressed the landlords and they in their turn fell upon the under-dog. People lost hope and were in no mood to pay. The Government resented Congress intervention. Restraints and repression became the order of the day. Harrowing stories might be told of the treatment of the Kisans. Tenants were beaten; moveable property attached; women were maltreated in a disgraceful manner. Free licence was given to the Zemindars, and both police and revenue officers were put at their disposal.[1]

Slowly the peasants were becoming conscious of their strength. Even in 1921, Nehru in his autobiography describes how the peasants took to mass travelling without any tickets! As early as 1922 some kind of Kisan agitation had been undertaken by the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi has carried on his *satyagraka* campaigns at Champaran in Behar and Bardoli in Gujerat, but a new note of rebelliousness began to creep in as despair intensified. In the U.P. the Kisan was not disposed to pay his rent and was even unprepared to listen to the Mahatma.

The 1937 Congress Session was held in a village—at

[1] It is worth noting that in villages where police stations are non-existent or the local officials weak, Imperialism controls the peasantry through the Zemindars.